



March 12, 2001

## CONTRACTING OFFICERS AND BUYERS

SUBJECT: Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program

Let me take this opportunity to outline the USPS commitment to JWOD. The program gets its name from its enabling legislation, the JWOD Act of 1971, 41 U.S.C. 46-48c. The Act calls on government agencies, including us, to purchase certain products and services from qualified not-for-profit businesses that principally employ the blind or severely disabled. When these businesses can meet our delivery and quality requirements at competitive prices they are, by law, mandatory sources that we must use.

Two national nonprofit agencies have been established to help the JWOD Committee administer the Act – NIB (National Industries for the Blind) and NISH which focuses on creating employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities. They both seek business opportunities for their nonprofit firms. They also serve as liaisons between these businesses, the JWOD Committee, and us.

Historically, the USPS has been a strong supporter of the program and a major customer for JWOD supplies and services. For example, we spent more than \$84 million with JWOD outlets during FY 2000. I should emphasize that the JWOD Program not only benefits those who are blind or have severe disabilities—and helps them become productive members of society—but **it also gives us sources that provide quality supplies and services.** JWOD firms have, over all, an excellent track record with us.

Our national coordinator and central point of contact for this program is Charles Hochstein. You can reach him by email or at 202-268-2575 if you need help or want information. I urge each of you and your staffs to learn about JWOD and to find ways these organizations can assist us in meeting our needs for top quality goods and services. You might wish to visit a NIB or NISH business and observe their processes and practices, or attend training conferences that they sponsor. It is only through our collective leadership and personal commitment that we can discharge our statutory obligations and maintain our active support and involvement with this important program.

The program also extends to our credit card buyers. We ask your help in making them aware of our responsibility to buy certain products from JWOD sources. To identify whether needed products or services are available from JWOD sources, you can check the JWOD internet site @ [www.jwod.com](http://www.jwod.com). You can also contact Boise Cascade, a JWOD distributor. As you know, Boise is our national supplier for office supplies, and JWOD office products are available through Boise.

NIB affiliated business are most active with us in providing a broad range of mail transportation products including boxes, trays, mailbags, spare parts, and even our aerosol cans of dog repellent. The list of products and services NIB firms provide is on their website at [www.nib.org](http://www.nib.org).

NISH is active in service contracting. For example, a NISH workshop performs grounds maintenance at a post office in Rancho Bernardo, California. Another provides custodial services at the post office in Douglas, Alaska. For a comprehensive listing of the various services NISH community rehabilitation programs can provide, check their website at [www.nish.org](http://www.nish.org). Their products and services have been used throughout our postal facilities.

We in Purchasing and Materials serve as the principal proponent of the JWOD Program within the USPS. Feel free to direct any questions about it to Charles Hochstein in our Supplier Development and Diversity organization.

Keith Strange